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W. A. Kellerman, Ph. D., Ohio State University

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THE GENUS PLEU-RO'-TUS.—This interesting group of Gill-fungi, belonging to the series of white-spored Agarics, is concisely described by Professor Atkinson in his Mushrooms Edible and Poisonous, and we can advantageously transcribe his language, which is as follows: "The genus

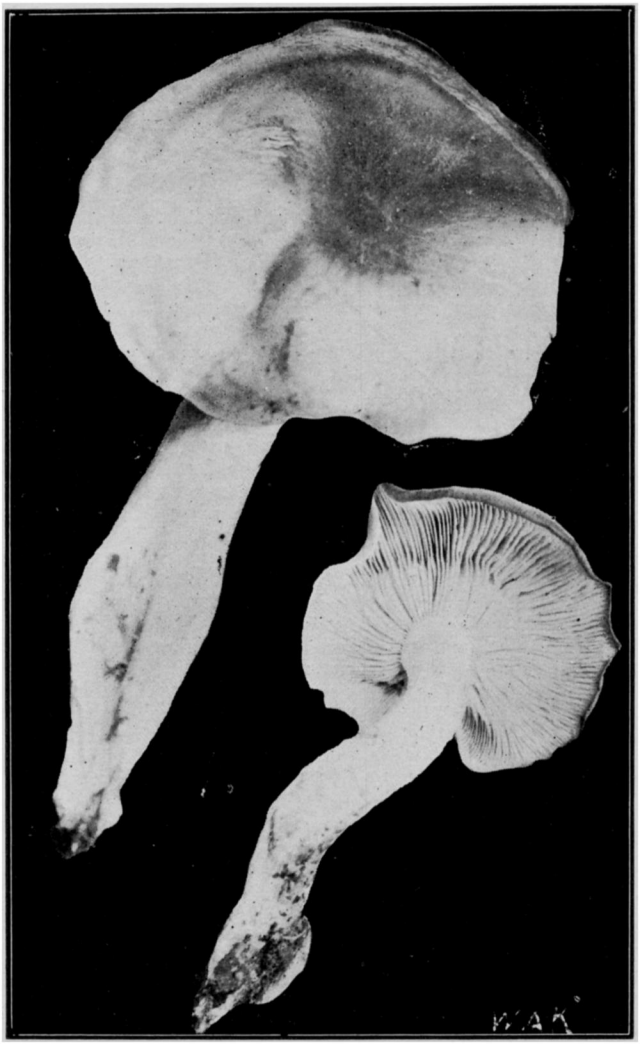

FIG. 129. PLEU-RO'-TUS UL-MA'-RI-US ELM PLEUROTUS EDIBLE. The half-tone shows two specimens, natural size, taken from the clump illustrated in Fig. 130, where further explanation may be found.

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Pleurotus is usually recognized without difficulty among the fleshy, white-spored agarics, because of the eccentric (not quite in the center of the pileus) or lateral stem, or by the pileus being attached at one side in a more or less shelving position, or in some species where the upper side of the pileus lies directly against the wood on which the plant is growing, and is then said to be resupinate. The gills are either decurrent (extending downward) on the stem, or in some species they are rounded or notched at the junction with the stem. There is no annulus, though sometimes a veil, and the genus resembles both *Tricholoma* and *Clitocybe*, except for the position of the stem on the pileus. In *Tricholoma* and *Clitocybe* the stem is usually attached at the center, and the majority of the species grow on the ground, while the species of Pleurotus are especially characterized by growing on wood. Some species, at least, appear to grow from the ground, as in Pleurotus petaloides, which is sometimes found growing on buried roots or portions of decaying stumps which no longer show above ground."

PLEU-RO'-TUS UL-MA'-RI-US; ELM PLEU-RO'-TUS.—This species is described as usually growing on the Elm—whence the name—but also occurring on other trees. It may be found at wounds where there is decaying wood—but it may occur on the ground as stated in the paragraph below. The mark that distinguishes this large species from the Oyster fungus and other related species is its long stem, usually attached near the center of the cap, and by the gills being rounded or notched at their inner extremity. The pileus is convex, the margin incurved, then nearly expanded. It is smooth and white or whitish; it may be yellowish or brownish in the center.

WHAT THE AUTHORS SAY OF THIS SPECIES.—It may add to the interest of this subject if some quotations as to the Elm Pleu-ro'-tus are added. Atkinson says: "The elm pleurotus has been long known as an edible fungus, and is regarded as an excellent one for food on account of its flavor and because of its large size. It occurs abundantly during the late autumn, and at this season of the year is usually well protected from the attacks of insects. It occurs in the woods, or fields, more frequently on dead trees. On shade trees which have been severely pruned, and are nearly or quite dead, it sometimes appears at the wounds, where limbs have been removed, in great abundance. In some plants the stems are strongly curved because the weight of the cap bore the plant downward. Sometimes when the plant is growing directly on the upper side of a branch or log, the stem may be central."

McIlvaine says: "The historic elms of Boston Common have borne copious crops of this well-known and easily distinguished species from time immemorial. Every fall, about the first of September, if the season is favorable, later if not, copious crops appear decorating the trunks, and branches, sometimes at a height of thirty or forty feet. Growth takes place where branches have broken off or the trees have been wounded from other causes. They occur very generally on elms in the outlying districts of the city, but rare in the country, seeming to be distinctly urban in their tastes. No damage is apparent from their growth."

OUR ILLUSTRATION OF THE ELM PLEU-RO'-TUS.—The remarkable specimen shown in Fig. 130 differs much from the common type—but they may be representatives of Pleu-ro'-tus ul-ma'-ri-us, as kindly determined for me by Professor Morgan. He remarked concerning them: "Something near Pleurotus ulmarius—the spores of this species, but the form is not typical."

Excellent figures of the Pleurotus ulmarius are given in Atkinson's Mushrooms Edible and Poisonous (on pp. 102-3). He shows two specimens with long, strongly curved stems, as seen from above, from below, and in section. The other species which he illustrates by half-tones are Pleu-ro'-tus os-tre-a'-tus, Pleu-ro'-tus sap'-i-dus, Pleu-ro'-tus dry-i'-nus Pleu-ro'-tus sul-fu-roi'-des and Pleu-ro'-tus pet-a-loi'-des.

FIG. 130. PLEU-RO'-TUS UL-MA'-RI-US ELM PLEUROTUS. EDIBLE. Not the typical or common form; it grows mostly on trees—this clump, however, grew on the ground. It was a large cespitose mass, the size indicated by the scale at the margin of the cut. Two plants from the cluster are shown in Fig. 129. Collected by H. H. York, near Columbus, Ohio, June 1, 1905.

FIG. 131. BO-LE'-TUS FEL.'-LE-US. BITTER BOLETUS. A conspicuous species, somewhat resembling the edible Boletus edulis, which is also common. Collected in the woods of the State Farm, Lancaster, Ohio.

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